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THE USE OF VIDEOTAPE RECORDERS IN THE TRAINING OF READING TEACHERS.

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The use of videotape recorders in the developmental reading practicum of the Experienced Teacher Fellowship Program in Reading at Clarke College, Dubuque, Iowa, is explained. Through microteaching, the participating teachers develop technical teaching skills necessary to all content areas and specific reading skills dealing with word analysis and comprehension. A videotape is made of the teacher as she teaches both small groups and regular classes of students. Afterward, the tape is viewed, discussed, and evaluated by the teacher and a supervisor. Subsequent revision of the lesson and reteaching results in improved teaching methods. The equipment used in the program includes a video recorder, a video camera, a small television monitor, and a microphone. The prices of videotape recorders (some under $1,500) are noted. References are listed. (BS)

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THE USE OF VIDEOTAPE RECORDERS IN THE TRAINING OF READING TEACHERS

FILMS AND ILLUSTRATED LECTURES
Friday, April 26, 1968 4:30-5:30

The use of videotape recorders has been found to be an effective method of training reading teachers. Through them a detailed study of individual teaching styles, teaching techniques common to all disciplines, and methods unique to reading instruction can be accomplished more effectively and more efficiently than by traditional methods of observation and evaluation. For this reason, the use of videotape has become standard procedure for all teachers enrolled in the developmental reading practicum in the Experienced Teacher Fellowship Program in Reading at Clarke College.

Microteaching

In our reading practicum the videotape recorder is utilized for microteaching. This is a scaled-down teaching encounter: The teacher teaches very short lessons, five to ten minutes, to small groups (4 to 6) of students (1). Because the lessons are short, the teacher can teach, evaluate, and reteach a number of lessons in a relatively short period of time. Reteaching can continue until the teacher demonstrates proficiency in the skill being considered.

During the microteaching exercises the teachers develop competence in using a number of technical teaching skills (1) which they are expected to utilize in classroom reading instruction. These skills can be employed in all content areas and at all grade levels including college teaching and are by no means unique to the teaching of reading. Their importance cannot be over emphasized. The technical teaching skills are concerned with the following areas of the teaching-learning act:

Questioning	Establishing Set
Reinforcement	Achieving Closure
Discussion	Non-Verbal Cues
Stimulus Variation	Control of Participation
Providing Feedback	Obtaining Attending Behavior
Recognizing Attending Behavior	Use of Appropriate Frames of Reference

In addition to the technical teaching skills, a series of reading micro-lessons has been developed by the practicum supervisors. These brief lessons are concerned with the word analysis and comprehension skills normally taught in developmental reading programs. Since knowledge of reading skills is vital, the teachers are required to demonstrate proficiency in teaching these lessons. The word analysis lessons were adapted primarily from lessons in teacher's manuals (3) and a reading methods text (4) while lessons in comprehension were designed in the areas suggested by Barrett in his taxonomy of cognitive and affective dimensions of reading comprehension (2).

It is with the reading lessons -- the presenting of reading skills -- where most emphasis is placed by the supervisors. However, the technical teaching skills are also stressed because of their inherent role in effective teaching in all disciplines.

The microteaching ordinarily takes place during the first hour of the morning when most teachers hold their reading lessons. Children to be taught in the micro-lesson leave their classroom for the short period of the lesson. The students involved are seldom out of their classroom for more than eight minutes. During the one-hour reading period two teachers are both able to teach and reteach at least one lesson.

The supervisor's role is one of a silent observer during the teaching and videotaping of a lesson. While viewing the playback, teacher and supervisor critique the teaching-learning interaction. If discussion

or controversy arises over a segment of a lesson, that portion is viewed several times for clarification. While lessons are usually viewed and critiqued immediately, they can be stored and viewed at a later date. Since microteaching allows us to breakdown the act of teaching and the content of reading into more manageable segments and since we are working with experienced teachers in our practicum, we usually find the first reteaching to be adequate for achieving the objectives of the lesson.

Simulation

An excellent way of introducing microteaching is through the use of simulated lessons. Here the teachers are asked to teach short lessons on some aspect of reading to their peers. All teachers are asked to experience both the teacher's role and the student's role in the simulation activities.

Since many teachers are somewhat uneasy during their initial videotaping, the simulated experiences with fellow teachers are found to be a reassuring means for introducing this method of evaluation. Supervisors are sensitive to reactions during the viewing of a teacher's first lesson since many teachers feel self-conscious and are often critical of their personal appearance on the television screen.

Classroom Videotaping

The effectiveness of the microteaching is determined by the extent to which the technical teaching skills and the knowledge of essential

reading skills are implemented in actual teaching situations.

After a teacher has gained proficiency in a number of the reading micro-lessons, he is videotaped while teaching a classroom reading lesson. The lesson may involve the whole class or a single reading group. Although teachers are encouraged to keep their lessons under twenty minutes, no ridged time limits are set. It is not desirable to videotape long lessons since the time can more efficiently be used to tape, view, and evaluate a number of shorter sequences.

We have found that the technical teaching skills and reading skills which are stressed in microteaching do transfer to classroom teaching. However, this cannot be assumed. The supervisors observe the teacher in classroom instruction as often as possible to insure teaching proficiency. If ineffective or inefficient teaching is witnessed, additional microteaching is required.

Videotape Equipment

There are several videotape recorder models on the market whose price and portability make their application possible in training reading teachers. Models priced under $1500 are now available. The units used by Clarke College consist of a video recorder which uses half-inch tape, a video (TV) camera, a small television monitor, and a microphone. The tape, similar to audio tape, may be erased, reused, or saved for later

viewing. The units are stored and transported on 18 x 30 inch utility carts for easy movement. They are also portable enough to be moved easily from school to school.

Operation of the equipment is easily learned. It is even possible for a teacher to set up a unit, focus the camera on the teaching area, and then teach the lesson without the assistance of another person. Experience has shown, however, that teachers will present better lessons if they needn't be bothered with the "mechanical" aspects of the videotaping. For this reason our teachers work in teams when videotaping lessons.

Summary

Utilizing videotape recorders in the training of reading teachers is an excellent means of insuring proficiency in the skills necessary to provide competent reading instruction. Through simulated exercises, microteaching, and classroom instruction, videotape permits teachers to become personally involved in the evaluation and improvement of their teaching.

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This was available to the people who attended our talk

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